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First Annual Report

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FIRST
ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
PHILADELPHIA ANTI-SLAVERY
SOCIETY.

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FIRST
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
BOARD OF MANAGERS

OF THE
✓
Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society,

27.5
READ AND ACCEPTED
AT THE
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY,

July 4th, 1835.

PHILADELPHIA :
PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY.

1835.

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a mayor nor a Dog Your Dam Basil

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

THE PHILADELPHIA ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY was organized on the 30th day of April, 1834, and held its first annual meeting on the 4th of July following, at which time an Address was delivered by CHARLES GILPIN, Esq. The Society having existed but a short time, no report was then submitted by the Board of Managers.

On the 4th of July, 1835, the Society met in the Musical Fund Hall; JOHN SHARP, JR. one of Vice-Presidents in the Chair.

The Annual Report was read by ARNOLD BUFFUM, and on motion, unanimously accepted. THOMAS SHIPLEY then offered the following resolution:

Whereas, The only true bond of union in human society is that of mutual protection in their natural and indefeasible rights; yet when, by a long course of oppression, one part of the inhabitants of a country have been deprived of their dearest privileges, Christianity requires that the oppressed refrain from physical resistance, and look only for redress to a peaceable amendment of the laws:

Resolved, As the sense of this Society, that it is the bounden duty of every good citizen of the United States to aid, as far as in him lies, to procure the amendment of whatever, in either the Constitution or Laws, upholds the monstrous oppression of Slavery and the Domestic Slave trade.

CHARLES GILPIN, Esq. rose to second the resolution and having made some appropriate remarks upon it, it was put to vote and adopted without a dissenting voice.

Dr. EDWIN P. ATLEE then delivered an oration explanatory of the principles of abolitionists, showing the beneficial effects which their practical application would have upon the happiness and prosperity of our country.

The Society then adjourned to meet at Clarkson Hall, at 8 o'clock in the evening.

EIGHT O'CLOCK, EVENING. The Society met pursuant to adjournment. JOHN SHARP, JR. in the Chair.

The Treasurer's Report was read, and Dr. E. P. ATLEE

and DILLWYN PARRISH were appointed to audit his accounts and report to the next meeting.

On motion, Resolved that the Society now proceed to an election of Officers for the ensuing year, by ballot.

The Chairman appointed PETER THOMAS and BENJAMIN S. JONES as tellers, when the Society proceeded to an election; the result of which was announced by the Chair as follows:

PRESIDENT,

DAVID PAUL BROWN.

VICE-PRESIDENTS,

JOSEPH M. TRUMAN, AND JAMES MOTT.

THOMAS SHIPLEY, *Sec'y of Foreign Correspondence.*

EDWIN P. ATLEE, *Sec'y of Domestic Correspondence.*

BENJAMIN S. JONES, *Recording Secretary.*

TREASURER,

JOHN SHARP.

MANAGERS,

ARNOLD BUFFUM,

HENRY GREW,

JAMES FORTEN,

FRED'K A. HINTON,

DILLWYN PARRISH,

WM. A. GARRIGUES,

CHARLES GILPIN,

DANIEL NEAL.

The following resolution, offered by Arnold Buffum, was referred to the next stated meeting.

Resolved, That the Constitution of the Society be so amended, that the annual meetings be held in future, on the first 4th day in the 10th month, instead of the 4th day of the 7th month, as at present provided.

Then adjourned.

REPORT.

DURING the past year, we have prepared an address to the public, explanatory of the principles of our Association, of which, we published 1500 copies for distribution among our fellow citizens.

We have also procured and distributed a considerable number of other publications, designed to promote the cause of universal freedom among men.

The quarterly meetings of the Society have been regularly held; besides which, public conversational meetings have been held weekly, under the direction of the Board, during the last six months; in the exercises of which, many of our members as well as a considerable number of other citizens and strangers have participated. We have been favoured with visits, from our distinguished friends, George Thompson, from England, James G. Birney, from Kentucky, and Henry B. Stanton, from Ohio; whose public labours in this city, we have reason to believe, were productive of much good.

Several of our members have visited neighbouring towns and villages, and delivered addresses which have been well received by the people; some have also been engaged in discussions in this city, which have resulted in considerable accession to our numbers.—Much more might have been done in the same way, but our opponents, seemingly aware that the result of investigation could only be favourable to our cause, have declined most of the discussions which we have sought with them; and we now believe, that there are none among their numerous champions, who would venture to meet our striplings in intellectual combat. Should we, however, be mistaken on this point, we here distinctly announce, that we are ever ready to engage in a fair and honourable discussion with their ablest men; and we respectfully invite such of our opponents as have confidence in the integrity of their own cause, to meet us in the field of public debate. We give this invitation, because we believe it is due to an intelligent com-

munity, to give them an opportunity, to hear the whole ground of controversy, fairly canvassed by advocates of the opposing schemes, in relation to the rights and welfare of our coloured fellow-countrymen; and we believe this cannot be so effectually done in any other way, as by bringing the opponents face to face, before the public. We rely not upon superiority of talents, nor upon the influence of great names and titles of distinction, for the success of our cause, but upon the immutable principles in which it is founded. Our motto is, "Great is truth, and it will prevail;" and we believe that the more our principles are investigated, the more speedy will be their universal prevalence.

Within the past year, very great has been the accession to the number of the avowed advocates of universal and immediate emancipation. Twelve months ago our opponents seemed to suppose, that we were so few and so feeble, that we could be driven from the controversy by mobocratic intimidation; the experiment, however, taught them that abolitionists were not the men that were to be frightened from their purpose; and the measures which were resorted to, under this delusive expectation, only tended to increase and confirm the number of our friends, and to stamp with disgrace the instigators of violence. The plan of coercion which was attempted at Lane Seminary, in Ohio, instead of sealing the lips of ninety abolitionists of the genuine stamp, only served to send them abroad to preach the glad tidings of deliverance to the captive, and determined the friends of human liberty to build up the Oberlin Institute in the wilderness of the west, where no gag will be imposed upon those who plead the cause of the suffering and the dumb. We hail the discussion which has been had within the past year, in several of the most respectable ecclesiastical bodies, as the omen of a better feeling and a better state of things in the Christian community at large; and we would especially refer to the powerful appeal to the Presbyterian Church, by ——— Stuart, from Illinois, delivered in their General Assembly, lately convened at Pittsburg.

We would also express our gratitude to the Supreme Law-giver of the Universe, that several of our most estimable statesmen, came forward at the last session of Congress, as the fearless advocates of the abolition of slavery in the district of

Columbia. We commend this subject to all the friends of our country's prosperity and honour, hoping that petitions for the removal of this foul disgrace, will receive the signatures of millions of our countrymen, for the next session of the national legislature.

The Board of Managers, in submitting their Report on this anniversary of their country's independence, regard the occasion as peculiarly calculated to impress every honest American bosom, with feelings of humiliation, in contemplating the glaring inconsistency between our professions as a great and magnanimous nation, and our practice as a slave-holding people.

Fifty-nine years ago, one of the most patriotic and intelligent deliberative assemblies, that was ever convened on the face of the earth, assembled in this city, representing the then British colonies in North America, published to the world their political creed, containing the important declaration, that "all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." For the support of these principles, they "solemnly pledged to each other, their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honour." The American people approved the declaration, and arming themselves in its defence, after a long and bloody conflict, obtained its recognition by the civilized powers of the world. Here then was set up an independent republican government, resting on the legitimate principle of the consent of the governed, and all the nations of the earth were invited to throw off the yoke of despotism, and to unite with us in sustaining the cause of universal liberty and the rights of man. Annually on the return of this anniversary, our orators paint in glowing colours the blessings of freedom, hailing liberty as the bright genius, which has led our country on to prosperity and renown, and given her a rank among the greatest and best of the nations of the earth; and seeming to forget the victims of oppression in our own land, they exultingly proclaim, that "on whatever part of God's creation a human form pines under chains, there Americans drop their tears."* They tell us of the dark cloud which once overshadowed this beautiful quarter of the globe, when con-

* Oration by President Maxcy, of Brown University.

sternation agitated the hearts of the inhabitants, war desolated our fields and buried our vales in blood; but the day-spring from on high, soon opened on us its glittering portals, the Angel of *liberty* descending, dropped on Washington's brow the wreath of victory, and stamped on American *freedom* the seal of omnipotence; they point us to Franklin, Washington, Lafayette and Jefferson as the great apostles of Liberty; even in our cradles our infant lips were taught to lisp their praises; when we were told that the fire of *freedom* which they had here lighted up, was disseminating its healthful influence over the whole world, and that tyranny and oppression must be driven from the earth. Such was the school of liberty and human rights in which we were educated, and in which, under the regulating influence of divine truth and love, those principles were embraced which are embodied in our association. Anti-slavery principles have already received the sanction of names, the most illustrious in the annals of time: These were the principles which moved Lafayette, to emancipate his slaves in the colony of Cayenne; which influenced Washington, on his dying bed, to give freedom to his slaves; which caused Randolph, in the solemn hour of death, to call upon men to bear witness, that it was his last and most sacred injunction, that his slaves should go free: These were the principles which placed Franklin at the head of the Abolition Society in Philadelphia, fifty years ago; and about the same time, produced the abolition of slavery in the middle and northern States of our country; and more recently in the colonies of Austria, Prussia and England. These principles made the illustrious Jefferson tremble for his country, when he reflected that God is just, and that his justice will not sleep for ever. By virtue of these principles we enjoy liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and by virtue of the same principles, the cause of liberty and human rights, is now diffusing itself throughout the civilized world. These were the principles which delivered the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, and which were most beautifully exemplified in the life and doctrines of Him, who came to break every yoke, and set the oppressed free. But notwithstanding we are encompassed with such a cloud of witnesses, to the excellency of these principles, and also the general admission of their truth "in the abstract," yet the

people of this highly favoured, and highly professing country, still tolerate and uphold a system of oppression, which utterly excludes one-sixth part of our entire population, from the enjoyment of the blessings which those principles were designed to secure, and reduces them to a level, in condition, with brute beasts; regarding them as articles of commerce, and withholding from them all the rights and privileges which God, in mercy designed for his rational children. The object of our association is, by the benign influence of light and love, to awaken the attention and the conscience of the people, (and especially of those who profess to hope for a seat at the right hand of the King Eternal, when he shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; when the criterion of separation will be, the having or not having administered to the wants of the least of his flock,) to a sense of the injustice, the cruelties and the sufferings which we are inflicting upon our unfortunate fellow countrymen, with no better plea, than that their parents having been stolen and robbed before them, we claim the right to visit not the sins, but the sufferings of the parents upon the children.

In presenting ourselves before the world, as the advocates of the rights of our oppressed fellow countrymen, we have been charged with pursuing measures calculated to destroy the union of our country. We believe this charge originated with our enemies, who do not themselves believe it is true; and that it was made for the purpose of creating a prejudice against us, in order to retard the progress of the holy cause in which we are engaged; the success of which is eminently calculated to establish the union of the States more permanently, on a basis which God will approve and crown with his blessing. We regard the continued union of the States, as essential to our individual and national welfare. Should a dissolution of the Union ever take place, frequent interruptions of that harmony and friendly intercourse, which are indispensable to our national prosperity would arise, and we should have reason to fear, that our fields would be fertilized with the blood of our sons: That man, therefore, who would trifle with the solidity of the Union, should be regarded as the enemy of his country; and he alone as a true patriot, who seeks to cement it upon the immutable principles of justice

and the rights of man. Never, since time began, have uninspired men laid a foundation of civil government with fewer imperfections, or affording greater evidence of wisdom and virtue, than is exhibited in the Constitution of the United States, so far as it applies to those who enjoy its privileges and protection; but that the framers of that instrument felt that they were fallible men, and that in the progress of the government some corrections would be required, is demonstrated by the clause which provides for amendments; and no part of that instrument, affords a brighter illustration of their penetrating wisdom, than that which thus acknowledges their own conviction of its imperfections. Several amendments have already been made, and shall we be deemed traitors to the Union, even should we desire an amendment of the Constitution, extending the shield of protection alike over all those who are born in our country?

Thus far we have been blessed under the administration of this government; and our attachment to the Union has been confirmed and strengthened by the success which has crowned with prosperity, those who under its protection pursue their own happiness. But in the midst of prosperity, we find a canker preying upon the vitals of the body politic, and threatening its ultimate dissolution; the Union of these States can never be secure, as long as the same Constitution and laws are designed for the government of a free and independent population in one section of the country, and of masters and slaves in another section. Union to be harmonious and perpetual, must be based upon a similarity of condition and circumstances, in the different sections of the country, and must be governed by the unchangeable principles of equal justice to all men. As long as a large proportion of the people of the country are excluded from the enjoyment of their unalienable rights, and are held in servile and degrading bondage, the demoralizing tendency of such a system, with the domineering spirit which it is calculated to inspire, and the contrariety of interests which it creates, will forever prove a source of unceasing jealousy and discord, as we have already had too much occasion to lament; and this is the gangrene which is far more likely than all other causes combined, to work a dissolution of the union of these States. To render the Union safe and per-

petual, we would incorporate into the body politic, the entire population of the country; we would extend equally over all the protection and privileges of the government; and by all reasonable means, promote the universal diffusion of literary, moral and religious instruction; that all might be prepared, wisely to enjoy freedom and happiness, and feel it to be their individual interest to add strength and stability to our free institutions.

The abolition of slavery, which our opponents have represented as a monster, that ten millions of freemen would be unable to manage, is, when rightly understood, simply a cessation from cruelty, oppression, pollution and robbery. It is not to remove the labouring population of the South from the service of their masters;—it is not to turn them loose to beg, steal or starve;—it is not to arm them with a spirit of revenge, or to give them a license to deluge the land with blood;—it is not to elevate uneducated ignorant men to political power, or to an equality of rank in social society; but it is to abolish that iniquitous system, which now holds two and a half millions of the American people as property, and treats them as cattle. It is to take *men* from the condition of slaves, driven to their toil by the lash of the whip, and to place them in that of free hired labourers, led on to their duty by encouragement, hope and reward;—it is to substitute for the pains of unremunerated servitude, the sweet assurance that the proceeds of their labour will be shared with those they love;—it is by education and by a moral and religious influence, aided by the wholesome restraints of law, to elevate those that are now degraded by oppression, above the practice of vice or the commission of crime;—it is to render the marriage covenant between those who voluntarily enter into it, sacred and inviolable; and thus to put an end to those heart-rending separations, and that flood of licentiousness, which are now a disgrace to the American name;—it is to abolish those fears of servile insurrection, which render the South so tremulous and sensitive at the mention of slavery;—it is, finally, to give to our suffering fellow heirs of immortality, the written testimony of the love and the mercy of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord; and to open a field for Christian labours, among two millions of heathen at our own doors.

These are our principles, and this the object for which our Institution is founded. We would frown upon every attempt or every thought having reference to any other than purely mild and peaceable means; under the banner of the Prince of Peace alone, do we engage in this holy cause; under the guidance of the Spirit of peace alone, will we seek the accomplishment of our purposes. It is the preservation of the peace, union and prosperity of our country which we love, and a desire to promote the cause of human liberty and happiness, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom among men, which urge us to plead with our countrymen, the cause of the deeply injured and long suffering children of oppression.

Some have expressed surprise, that the purity of our principles has obtained the support of so few of the most distinguished men in our country; while so many of the world's honourables are found in the ranks of our opponents. We do not regard this as a subject of wonder, because we are persuaded, that those who, like the proud Pharisee, glory in the distinction which enables them to thank God that they are not as other men are, will ever be found in bitter hostility to our Association: yet we have cause to bless the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, that since the formation of the New England Anti-Slavery Society by ten individuals, about the first of the year 1832, tens of thousands have enlisted in the same righteous cause, exhibiting a phalanx of moral energy and worth, such as we believe was never before united in a single object;—a national Anti-Slavery Society has been organized, with about 250 auxiliaries, scattered over thirteen States of the Union; and we are encouraged to believe, that this blessed cause is destined as an instrument in the hands of our Heavenly Father, to awaken the Christian church from its lethargy; to lead it away from its time-serving policy; to purify it from the doctrine of political expediency; and to promote its establishment upon the unchangeable principles promulgated by its blessed Head; and finally, to unite the moral power of the whole nation, in asserting the right of the oppressed to go free. We believe the day is near at hand, when this glorious consummation will be fully realized; when the manacles of the slave shall fall to the ground; the obstacles to the spread of the Gospel shall be done away, and angels

will renew the triumphant song, "Glory to God, in the highest; on earth, peace and good will to men."

The last anniversary of the National Society, was to those of us who attended it, a season of the highest encouragement; it was peculiarly gratifying to witness the uniform and heartfelt solicitude, to place the entire population of our country in a condition in which there will be no obstacle to their intellectual, moral and religious instruction. The remarkable liberality, with which the friends of the cause contribute of their earthly substance, to promote the restoration of violated rights, affords the most encouraging evidence, that they have enlisted their whole souls in the blessed work, and gives full assurance, that they will never falter, until the last chain of slavery shall be broken.

Commending our cause to "the God of the spirits of all flesh, who hath made of one blood, all nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth," we invite the zealous and active co-operation of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and those whom he came to seek and to save.

APPENDIX.

THE number of slaves in the United States, is computed at two and a quarter millions. The number in the districts under the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress, is about thirty thousand.

The number of children annually born in the United States, and subjected to involuntary servitude, is one hundred and fifty thousand, or four hundred every twenty-four hours.

A slave is a man, who is endowed by his Creator with the unalienable right of enjoying life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. He is called a slave, because he is unrighteously robbed of his rights, and reduced, with few exceptions, to a level in condition with brute beasts.

The servitude to which slaves are subjected is so grievous to be borne, and such a gross outrage upon humanity, that the oppressors dare not allow them to be taught to read, in consequence of which, we behold one sixth of the population of this *professing* Christian country, in such a degraded condition, that they are not permitted to read the Bible.

The annual increase of the slave population is computed at seventy-five thousand; these go to supply the market, which is kept brisk by the progress of settlement in the new States.

The increasing demand for labour requires all the supply afforded by natural increase and by European immigration.

The death of forty thousand slaves by cholera in one year, so cut off the supply for the market, that the price advanced full twenty-five per cent: whence we infer, that the removal of forty thousand labourers, from the slave States, in a year, must not only advance the price, but also greatly increase the temptation to smuggle in fresh victims from Africa, and obstruct the progress of manumissions, whether the removal was effected by cholera or colonization.

One-sixth part of all the women in the United States, although they have fathers and husbands, are claimed as the property of other men, and have no protection. Licitiousness and amalgamation are the natural and certain result of such a state of things.

The African slave trade, is declared by the laws of the general government to be piracy, and is punishable with death. The American slave trade, extensively carried on in the District of Columbia, receives from the general government the same protection as the trade in horses and chattels.

The actual sale of human beings in the United States to the highest bidder, is computed to amount to twenty-five millions of dollars annually.

Before the Colonization Society was organized, it was very common for slaveholders on their dying beds to emancipate their slaves; but since the scheme of expatriation has been got up, few have been willing in a dying hour, to incur the dreadful responsibility of banishing those whom they had already too deeply injured, from the land of their birth.

We believe that a large majority of the supporters of the colonization policy, think that they are engaged in a good work; consequently, we hope that a more full investigation of the subject, in all its relations and bearings, will bring them to act with us, in promoting the cause of universal freedom, with out the condition of expatriation.

As Christians, the American people believe that every man is endowed by his Creator with the unalienable right of nourishing and protecting his wife and children. As a slaveholding nation, we deny the exercise of this right to a large portion of our fellow countrymen.

As Christians, we believe that in all things, we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us. As slaveholders, we do unto others in all things, precisely what we would not have them do unto us.

As Christians, if we were going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and saw one in the hands of robbers, we would have compassion on him, and do all that was in our power to relieve him; as the supporters of slavery, we pass by on the other side.

As Christians, if a poor beggar were laid at our gate, desiring the crumbs which fall from our tables, we would administer to his wants; as the apologists for the continuance of slavery, we leave him to perish in hopeless despair.

Memorials, addressed to the churches, and to ecclesiastical bodies, should be circulated and receive the signature of every individual, who wishes to see the Christian church purified from the great abomination of slavery, with all its odious appendages; that the Church may be induced to set an example in truth and righteousness, such as she would wish the world to follow.

Let the Church be called upon, not merely to give freedom to the slave, but to "receive him, not now as a servant, but above a servant, as a brother beloved;" seeing he was created in the image of God, and is a candidate for a crown of unfading glory.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

DAVID MANDEVILLE, TREASURER, IN ACCOUNT WITH THE
PHILADELPHIA ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

1834.	Dr.	
6 mo. 4,	To Balance from preceding Treasurer,	\$ 1 50
“ 26,	Admission fees of eight members, - -	16 00
“ 26,	Donations from sundry persons, - -	13 00
10 mo. 4,	Admission fees, - - - - -	2 00
“	Contribution at Musical Fund Hall, - -	20 33
12 mo. 4,	Monthly contribution, - - - - -	31 87
1835.		
1 mo. 1,	Admission fees of two members, - -	4 00
2 mo. 18,	Contributions rec'd by Joshua Coffin, - -	13 50
4 mo. 3,	Ditto ditto - - - - -	13 00
“ 30,	Admission fees of three members, - -	6 00
5 mo. 4,	Monthly contribution, - - - - -	16 62½
6 mo. 5,	Admission fees of two members, - -	4 00
6 mo. 7,	Donation collected by Thomas Shipley, - -	81 00
7 mo. 3,	Ann. sub'ption p'd in by Ch. C. Jackson, - -	36 00
“ 4,	Donation at Musical Fund Hall, - - -	9 00
		\$267 82½

1834.	Cr.	
8 mo. 26,	By Cash paid Joseph S. Gibbons for Books, Stationary, &c. - - - - -	\$ 8 25
“ 30,	Cash paid Thomas Town for printing, - -	20 10
10 mo. 8,	Cash paid Ed. Hopper's bill for Room, &c. - -	4 25
12 mo. 13,	Cash paid Treasurer of Pennsylv'a Aboli- tion Society for 1 q'ter's rent of Hall, - -	15 75
1835.		
2 mo. 18,	Cash paid Draft of Thomas Shipley as Chairm'n of Board of Managers, - -	33 27
“	Cash paid to Joshua Coffin, - - - - -	6 00
3 mo. 22,	Cash paid Mentz & Son, for a book, - -	1 25
“ 28,	Cash paid Sam'l F. Troth, for the use of the Hall of Pharmacy, - - - - -	9 00
6 mo. 14,	Cash paid Donation to the American Anti- Slavery Society, - - - - -	50 00
“	Cash paid P. G. Williams, New York, for Tracts, &c., per T. Shipley, - - - - -	28 11
6 mo. 8,	Cash paid Wm. P. Gibbons, for printing 1500 copies of Society's Address, - -	41 38
“	Cash paid T. E. Chapman, for covers for Society's Address, - - - - -	6 75
7 mo. 4,	Cash paid for Musical Fund Hall, - - -	33 00
		Balance due the Society, - - -
		\$267 82½

To the Board of Managers of the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society.

The Committee appointed to examine the Account of the late Treasurer, respectfully report, That they have examined his Accounts, and on comparing the vouchers, find them correct: and that the whole amount to be paid into the hands of the present Treasurer, due to the Society, is \$10 71 1-2.

EDWIN P. ATLEE, }
DILLWYN PARRISH, } Committee.

7 month, 20th, 1835.

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